

*Occupations*

XXIX

with rather long legs, a slender body, and large horns. The horns, while young, are dressed into most manifold strange forms, this being the business of a particular craftsman, the "dresser of horns". Sometimes in a large herd one sees hardly any cattle with the horns in their natural shape. An illustration of how cattle are cherished and almost regarded as personal beings is the fact that they have about 40 different names for cattle, according to their colour, the configuration or size of the horns, etc. Vide page 107. — Domestic animals are not butchered, except when sick or exceedingly old. Oxen and goats are killed on festival occasions, such as funeral or marriage meals, or as sacrifices to Nyikang and Jwok. Neither do they sell cattle; for a stranger it is practically impossible to purchase a cow or an ox. The price of a cow is about £ 5; an ox is half the value of a cow which has calved; a young heifer has double the value of a cow. — Slaying a cow is done by stabbing it with a spear in the nape, so that the aorta is pierced. The blood is collected and cooked as food.

The cows are milked morning and evening, usually by boys, sometimes also by old men, but not by women, the latter having nothing to do with cattle. The quantity of milk obtained is but poor. A gourd is the usual milk vessel. These are washed with cow-urine, which gives the milk an unpleasant flavour. They also wash their hands in cow-urine; but they do not mix the milk with it, as is the custom with Dinkas and Nuers.

Each village possesses a common cow-shed, but into it the herd is put at night during the rainy season only, when the mosquitoes are very bad. The rest of the year they are kraaled in the open yard, where they are tied with ropes to short pegs driven into the ground. This cattle-court is a semi-circular enclosure; at the entrance to it there is a small circular place built of cere stalks and covered with ashes, in which the young men who watch the herd sleep. A fire of dried cow dung is kept smouldering all night in this place. Sick cattle are nursed in the cow-shed during the daytime, to keep them out of the sun and away from food, but not in the night, unless it is the season when all the cattle are housed. Many cattle die every year, from intestinal worms and other diseases. A considerable number of cows are barren.

The cattle are herded by young men and boys. As soon as the dew has dried off the grass, the herd is driven into the pasture. During the dry season, when grass is getting rare, the herds migrate into the lower and swampy parts of the country, where the grass is still flourishing; the Shilluks along the White Nile cross over to the east bank; likewise the cattle of the Sobat Shilluks descend to the lagoons south of the Sobat. So in both cases they have to cross the rivers, which is, on account of the many crocodiles living in them, not undangerous, and is therefore done with much care and accompanied by

233

[192]

[782]

[435] ●

234

[462]

[415]

[177]

[233]

343

233

221

233

[462]